

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PORT A 03382 01 OF 02 061850Z

42

ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /024 W

----- 016686

P 061733Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3515

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT AU PRINCE 3382

H PLEASE PASS COPY TO CHAIRMAN RODINO

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OREP PFOR PINT SREF SHUM CGEN HA

SUBJ: CODEL RODINO'S VISIT TO HAITI

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 3361

1. SUMMARY. CONGRESSMAN PETER W. RODINO, JR., CHAIRMAN, HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, ACCOMPANIED BY CHIEF OF STAFF GARNER J. CLINE, VISITED HAITI NOV 27 - DEC 3 IN ORDER TO ASSESS CAUSES OF HAITIAN ILLEGAL EMIGRATION TO UNITED STATES, GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE TOWARD ANY HAITIANS WHO MIGHT BE DEPORTED NOTWITHSTANDING CLAIMS OF POLITICAL ASYLUM, CHANGES IN REGIME SINCE DR. DUVALIER'S DAY, AND IMPACT OF NEW IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION ON "BRAIN DRAIN" OF QUALIFIED HAITIANS. BASED ON EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL HAITIANS INCLUDING PRESIDENT DUVALIER AND MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERIOR, RODINO WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION RELEVANT TO ALL THESE POINTS AND TO IMPRESS UPON HAITIANS THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVING HUMAN RIGHTS AND MAINTAINING THE DIRECTION OF INTERNAL REFORM OF RECENT YEARS. END SUMMARY.

2. RANGE OF CONTACTS. CONGRESSMAN RODINO MET WITH THE PAPAL NUNCIO, INTERIOR MINISTER BIAMBY AND UNDER SECRETARY EDOUARD, FOREIGN MINISTER BRUTUS, PRESIDENT DUVALIER, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN HAITI, HAITI'S SOLE RESIDENT U.S. CORRESPONDENT, AND FOUR LEADERS IN BUSINESS, JOURNALISM, AND THE LAW, AS WELL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PORT A 03382 01 OF 02 061850Z

AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE HAITIAN RED CROSS. IN ADDITION,

CODEL HAD EXTENSIVE CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND MEMBERS OF THE EMBASSY STAFF.

3. ILLEGAL EMIGRATION - ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL?

IN THE CONTEXT OF CHARGES BY U.S. CIVIL LIBERTIES GROUPS AND OF THE PENDING APPEALS OF SOME 500-600 HAITIANS WHO CLAIM POLITICAL ASYLUM, CODEL EXTENSIVELY SOUGHT TO DETERMINE EXTENT TO WHICH ILLEGALS DEPARTED HAITI FOR POLITICAL REASONS OR FOR ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS. CONSISTENT RESPONSE FROM ALL SOURCES WAS THAT SEARCH FOR A BETTER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY WAS PREDOMINANT MOTIVATION IN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF CASES. SOURCES CITED HISTORICAL PATTERN OF HAITIAN EMIGRATION TO OTHER ISLANDS IN CARIBBEAN, EVIDENCE THAT RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION WAS CONTINUING DESPITE RECENT ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENTS, AND SUSCEPTIBILITY OF MANY UNEMPLOYED HAITIANS TO PROMISES OF ORGANIZED REFUGEE SMUGGLERS. SOURCES CONCEDED THAT SOME POLITICALLY MOTIVATED REFUGEES WOULD ALWAYS BE A SMALL MINORITY AND URGED THAT THESE PERSONS SHOULD HAVE FULL OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH THEIR BONA FIDES UNDER INS SCREENING PROCEDURES.

4. TREATMENT OF DEPORTEES. BOTH INTERIOR MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTED THAT SINCE MAJORITY OF REFUGEES WERE NON-POLITICAL, AND CONSIDERED AS SUCH, THEY WOULD ENCOUNTER NO DIFFICULTY WERE THEY TO BE DEPORTED BACK TO HAITI BUT WOULD BE GIVEN ASSISTANCE TO RETURN TO THEIR VILLAGES. SUCH TREATMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, HAD ALREADY BEEN EXTENDED TO HAITIANS DEPORTED FROM BAHAMAS TO PORT DE PAIX REGION IN NORTHERN HAITI. IT WAS NOTED THAT ANY SUDDEN LARGE INFUX OF DEPORTEES WOULD CAUSE RESETTLEMENT DIFFICULTIES FOR HAITI. (GOH OFFICIALS MAY HAVE SOUGHT TO CONVEY NEED FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WERE THIS TO BE THE CASE.) ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH COULD HAVE BEARING UPON TREATMENT OF AT LEAST SOME DEPORTEES IS HAITIAN STATUTE PROVIDING FOR SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR IMPRISONMENT FOR THOSE WHO EMIGRATE WITHOUT VALID EXIT DOCUMENTS. TO WHAT EXTENT THIS SANCTION WOULD BE APPLIED WAS UNCLEAR. NEVERTHELESS, ASSURANCES OF "NO REPRISAL" POLICY WERE EXPLICIT.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 PORT A 03382 01 OF 02 061850Z

5. EXTENT OF REPRESSION UNDER PRESENT REGIME.
HAITIAN UNOFFICIAL SOURCES CONSISTENTLY TESTIFIED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS HAD SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED OVER PREVIOUS REGIME. THEY CITED LACK OF INDISCRIMINATE TERROR AGAINST THOSE SUSPECTED OF BEING SYMPATHETIC TO OPPOSITIONIST GROUPS, ATMOSPHERE OF OPENNESS AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT COUNTRY, TOLERANCE OF CRITICAL PRESS OPINION, AND RESTRAINTS ON ABUSE OF POLICE AND JUDICIARY POWER. AT SAME TIME, BOTH

OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL SOURCES EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER UNRELENTING COMMUNIST EFFORTS TO INFILTRATE AND ESTABLISH NETWORKS IN HAITI. ONE HAITIAN SOURCE, HIMSELF A PASTOR WHO HAD WITNESSED THE REGIME'S TERROR TACTICS IN 1963 AT JEREMIE, DEPLORED SEVERAL RECENT ARRESTS OF SUSPECTED COMMUNISTS BUT ASSERTED THAT GOVERNMENT CAUTION IN SUCH CASES WAS WARRANTED GIVEN DANGER TO HAITIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PORT A 03382 02 OF 02 061851Z

42

ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /024 W

----- 016700

P 061733Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3516

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 PORT AU PRINCE 3382

STRUCTURE IF COMMUNIST SUBVERSION WENT UNCHALLENGED. PRESIDENT DUVALIER ALSO DREW ATTENTION TO COMMUNIST THREAT, BACKED BY CUBA, AND SAID THAT EXCESSIVE LIBERALISM WITH REGARD TO SUCH PERSONS WOULD ONLY ENCOURAGE THEIR EFFORTS TO OVERTHROW THE REGIME. AT SAME TIME, DUVALIER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ECONOMIC BACKWARDNESS OF COUNTRY OFFERED TRADITIONAL TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNISTS, AND HE STRESSED FUNDAMENTAL NEED TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO OVERCOME SUCH BACKWARDNESS IN SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME.

6. NEW IMMIGRATION LAW AND "BRAIN DRAIN"

IN RESPONSE TO CODEL'S QUESTIONS ABOUT GOH POSITION SHOULD NEW IMMIGRATION LAW ENCOURAGE EMIGRATION OF HIGHLY SKILLED HAITIANS, PRODUCING ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACT, GOH OFFICIALS SAID THEY WOULD KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON THIS PROBLEM AND WOULD CONSIDER CONTROL MEASURES SHOULD ISSUE BECOME SERIOUS FOR HAITI'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. FACT THAT HIGHER EDUCATION IS TOTALLY SUBSIDIZED BY STATE, THEY OBSERVED, DID IMPOSE SOME OBLIGATION ON GRADUATES TO RENDER SERVICE TO STATE, AT LEAST FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE SEEKING TO EMIGRATE.

7. U.S. CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS EMPHASIZED.
UNDERLYING ALL CHAIRMAN RODINO'S CONVERSATIONS WAS HIS
EFFECTIVE EMPHASIS UPON U.S. CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS
OBSERVANCE IN HAITI. THIS POINT WAS FULLY APPRECIATED BY
HIS INTERLOCUTORS. PROMINENT PRESS COVERAGE OF DINNER
HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR (SEE PORT AU PRINCE 3361)
INCLUDED RODINO'S EXPRESSION OF GRATIFICATIN OVER RECENT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PORT A 03382 02 OF 02 061851Z

RELEASE OF 261 PRISONERS AT PRESIDENT'S DIRECTION, AND
REPORTED RODINO'S HOPE THAT IN NEAR FUTURE PRESIDENT WOULD
THINK OF THOSE WHO WERE STILL UNDER LEGAL AND PREVENTIVE
DETENTION WITH VIEW TO RELEASING THEM. RODINO TOLD
PRESIDENT THAT BEFORE VISITING HAITI HE HAD OBTAINED VERY
MIXED REPORTS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS HERE AND THAT
HE WAS GRATIFIED TO NOTE EVIDENCE OF GREATER LIBERALIZATION;
THIS EVIDENCE WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO NUMEROUS
INQUIRIES FROM CONGRESS AND FROM HIS CONSTITUENCY BEARING
ON THIS ISSUE. AT SAME TIME, RODINO STRESSED THAT HAD HE
REACHED A DIFFERENT CONCLUSION DURING THIS VISIT, HE WOULD
NOT HAVE HESITATED TO SAY SO, AND THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE TO
KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON DEVELOPMENTS. PRESIDENT TOOK CAREFUL
NOTE OF THIS OBSERVATION.

8. PRESS COVERAGE. LENGTHY ARTICLE ON DECEMBER 3
WRITTEN BY EDITOR OF LE MATIN NEWSPAPER (PORT AU
PRINCE 3361) WAS REPORTED BY RADIO NEWS AND IMMEDIATELY
BECAME MAJOR TOPIC OF CONVERSATION FOCUSING ATTENTION
ONCE AGAIN ON U.S. CONCERN FOR ADEQUATE OBSERVATION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS. GIVEN HAITIANS' LOVE OF POLITICAL SPECULATION,
IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS HAVE BEEN
PLACED ON TIMING OF VISIT, E.G. AFP CORRESPONDENT ASKED
RODINO IN DEPARTURE INTERVIEW IF HIS VISIT HAD BEEN DESIGNED
BY NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO BALANCE CONCURRENT VISIT OF
TWO U.S. SENATORS TO CUBA. RODINO CATEGORICALLY REJECTED
THIS THESIS AND EXPLAINED HIS TRIP WAS AT HIW OWN INSTIGATION
AND AROSE BECAUSE OF CONCERNS WITHIN HIS CONSTITUENCY AND
HIS COMMITTEE. WE SHALL REPORT FURTHER PRESS COMMENT
AND OTHER PUBLIC REACTION.

9. FOREGOING MESSAGE, WITH EXCEPTION OF PARAGRAPH 8,
CLEARED WITH CHAIRMAN RODINO BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE.
ISHAM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL ASYLUM, HUMAN RIGHTS, EMIGRANTS, CODELS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PORTA03382
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760450-0737
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761269/aaaachxa.tel
Line Count: 217
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PORT AU PRINCE 3361
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUL 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL RODINO'S VISIT TO HAITI
TAGS: OREP, PFOR, PINT, SREF, SHUM, CGEN, HA, (RODINO, PETER W)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006